

SPIRITUAL TELEGRAPH

DEVOTED TO THE ILLUSTRATION OF SPIRITUAL INTERCOURSE.

"THE AGITATION OF THOUGHT IS THE BEGINNING OF WISDOM."

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The Principles of Nature.

POSITIVE AND SPECULATIVE KNOWLEDGE.

A LECTURE DELIVERED BEFORE THE CONGREGATION ASSEMBLED IN DORR'S ACADEMY, ON SUNDAY MORNING, SEPT. 30, 1854.

BY W. S. COURTNEY.

There are two sorts of knowledge in the world. *Positive* knowledge, or that which is certainly ascertained and known, and *Speculative* knowledge, or that which is merely hypothetical and conjectural. All human knowledge, of whatsoever kind, belongs to one or the other of these classes—is either certain knowledge or theoretical knowledge. It is very true that what man knows, including both positive and speculative knowledge, bears no relation to that which he does not know, just as a point bears no relation to infinite space, or time no relation to eternity. His knowledge is but a single ray of that light which fills the universe; and his brain no more comprehends all knowledge than his eye takes in all the light. We don't, therefore, mean to class theoretical knowledge with utter ignorance; for it is consistent with, and frequently the offspring of, a high degree of learning and philosophy. But it is that species of knowledge which rests in theory, hypothesis, or conjecture, and is, of course, dubious, contingent, doubtful, and mutable; whereas, positive knowledge is fixed and determinate, and admits of no cavil, doubt, or mutability. The one is the cognizance, memory, sensational perception, and intellectual apprehension of the economy and laws of the varied phenomena of the universe, while the other is only the *supposititious explanations* of those phenomena. *Speculative* knowledge supplies the place of positive knowledge when and where we have not yet reduced, or are unable to reduce, phenomena and their explanation to the positive degree; and, as I shall by-and-by show, it often *usurps* the place of positive knowledge, even long after the subjects and phenomena it undertakes to explain have been studied and reduced to the positive grade. Theoretical knowledge often aids and assists the philosophic investigator in ascertaining the true laws and science by which any phenomenon, or class of phenomena, are governed. It invariably precedes positive knowledge, which comes after it and affirms it, or repudiates and overthrows it. Its nature is always provisional and temporary, while positive knowledge is invariable and eternal. For instance, that the earth is many thousands of years old, according to the Mosaic account, or the Jewish cosmology, is merely conjectural knowledge. That thunder and lightning are meteoric, and that they are occasioned by an electrical discharge consequent upon the proximity or contact of positively and negatively charged clouds, is positive knowledge; but that the lightning is the flash of Jupiter's anger, and that he did the thundering, is speculative knowledge. That Christ lived and was a very upright and self-sacrificing man, is positive knowledge; but that he was God himself is highly conjectural and hypothetic. That a man lives a man in the spiritual world, after physical dissolution, is now positive knowledge; but that his soul goes millions of miles to a place called heaven, or as far in the opposite direction to a place called hell, is extremely dubious and theoretical. Positive knowledge includes all the facts of history, the phenomena of the universe, and the scientific exposition of the laws and principles which regulate and govern them. All the ascertained facts, laws, and principles of the various sciences, such as astronomy, geology, mineralogy, meteorology, numbers, mensuration, natural history, archaeology, anatomy, psychology, phrenology, physiology, pathology, sociology, agriculture, chemistry, mechanics, etc., belong to the realm of positive knowledge; while speculative knowledge includes all the various theories, systems, and hypotheses invented or projected by the human mind to explain that which is yet unknown or unknowable in the various sciences and branches of human inquiry, including all religious systems and speculative articles of faith—all mythology, tradition, prophecy, theology, astrology, theurgy, demonology, apocrypha, etc.

But why is it that men will invent hypotheses and project systems and theories, which they afterward worship, to elucidate and explain problems that arise in their minds, and facts and phenomena that surround them, instead of carefully studying and analyzing them, and ascertaining their laws and principles—their science—as they go along? Why are they not contented with the slow process of analytic and inductive investigation, instead of guessing and transcendentalizing? 'Twere surely better to know *certainly* all that can be known in the premises, than to rely upon vague and doubtful conjectures.

The investigation and explanation of the wonders by which man is surrounded, and the laws of his being, his origin, and destiny, is a characteristic of his nature. He is endowed with powers and faculties to be used and exercised upon the explanation and resolution of the phenomena by which he is surrounded. These faculties impel him to the use of them. He has an inherent curiosity to know the truth concerning every thing that meets his eye or arises in his mind. He instinct-

ively seeks to solve the problems of existence presented to him, and is restive and unhappy until he has determined the matter in some way. His native curiosity and thirst for knowledge incessantly prompt him to investigate and analyze, to study and explain the wonders that surround him. It is no mere play or recreation of his faculties, but a normal exercise and want of his nature. It is a necessity of his being—a constitutional law of his life. Philosophy, then, which is but the explanation of the phenomena of the universe, is inherent in the nature of man. Hence, every people, nation, and tribe have their philosophy—their explanation of the universe and its phenomena—their origin and destiny. They have their myths, traditions, and speculations as to their own creation, purpose, and destiny, and as to the Agent or Agencies that created and overrule all mundane things. They have their theology, their systems of religious faith, their astrology, demonology, supernaturalism, etc. Hence, philosophy, in some crude form, marks the history of every people, however rude and ignorant, as it marks the history of the most cultivated and intelligent. When any thing extraordinary meets the eye of man he is at once impelled to seek for the explanation of it; and if he is sufficiently developed to analyze it scientifically, he discovers the law which produced and governs it, and his knowledge touching it becomes positive. It is no longer a mystery or wonder; it is no longer dubious, conjectural, and contingent. He sees through it, comprehends its cause, and is assured that the same law, circumstances, and conditions will always produce the same or similar phenomena; and he can accordingly always calculate upon it, and order his conduct and adapt his aims in accordance with it. But, on the other hand, if he does not use his faculties to this end, or if he is not sufficiently developed to study it inductively and scientifically, but is ignorant, and, of course, credulous and simple, he refers it to some supernaturalism, or accepts some hypothetical or mythological account of it, and, accepting and believing accordingly, leaves it in the domain of speculative knowledge. For instance, when the former sees the lightning flash and hears the thunder roar, he sets to work to investigate the cause of these phenomena, and to ascertain and fix the laws and conditions by which they are governed and controlled. He institutes inductions, makes observations, tries experiments, marks the attendant peculiarities, finds out the accompanying phenomena, determines what conditions are necessary and what unnecessary, and follows up his inquiry step by step, until he learns thoroughly all the laws, principles, properties, conditions, and results of the phenomena, and reduces them to a familiar science, which enables himself with a rod or wand to control their fiery and terror-striking manifestations! While the latter, when he observes them, is struck with awe and terror. He ascribes them to some restless and angry demon, or to some occult and inscrutable cause, known only to God. He knows from experience that it can strike him instantly dead, and to propitiate the anger of the demon, as he knows his own anger is appeased by sacrifices and presents, he prays to it and offers up to it his ox, or his slave, or his enemy, or his child as a sacrifice! Our age and nation is by no means generally developed up to that point where positive knowledge supersedes and dissipates speculative knowledge on all subjects and phenomena relating to our well-being and destiny; more, perhaps, for the reason that the disciples of the ancient supernaturalism and speculative expositions still extant among us connive at or ignore the positive teachings of modern science on all those subjects. Our modern priesthood, upon precisely the same principle, and from precisely the same motive that the ancient supernaturalist sought to appease the demon of thunders, still prays in times of drought for rain, and in times of storm and rain for fair weather, to the Power which they conceive directly superintends and capriciously interferes with those meteoric phenomena, disregarding or ignoring the established laws and conditions under and by which they are produced. Wherein is the difference? Both proceed upon a speculative or conjectural explanation of those phenomena, while there is a science fully disclosing their *rationale*, and developing the laws and conditions under and by virtue of which they are invariably produced.

The positivist claims that all phenomena are the product of and governed by law; that the Omnipotent Power of the universe works only by and through law, in the minutest as well as the grandest things; that each single thing is constitutionally impressed with the laws of its existence which govern and control it in every period of its history; that those laws are never suspended or contradicted; that they are the will of God, eternal, unchangeable, and omnipotent. Those laws which obtain in the various departments of Nature, and of human knowledge and inquiry, he classifies and embodies in the various sciences. For instance, the laws and conditions which characterize, govern, and control the heavenly bodies he calls astronomical law; the laws and conditions which regulate and control the functions of his physical economy he styles physiological laws; the laws and conditions which regulate and govern fluids and gases he styles chemical law, and so on through all the sciences. But all these laws in their totality he denominates the "*Laws of Nature*." The present advanced state

of the sciences, or, what is the same thing, our present knowledge of those laws of Nature, and the conditions under which they operate, is the result of long centuries of continual inquiry and patient observation. It has accumulated upon us by the slow additions of ages. It is a growth as our globe is, and has passed through various stages of development. The unflinching regularity and uniformity with which those laws have been hitherto observed to act, whenever known in the various departments of Nature, gives the positivist the calm assurance that *all* the laws of Nature yet undiscovered and unknown to him are alike uniform and immutable. In fact, he has an intuitive perception or instinct that such is the case, and hence the idea of caprice, or chance, or contingency is wholly excluded from the universe. The positivist, or man of science, can not, therefore, admit any supernaturalism, or any agency outside of and above the established order, and independent of it, which capriciously interferes with it to suspend, contradict, or change its regular movement and operation. He sees only that the Supreme Intelligence or Power of the universe has expressed itself in this order, and works only in, by, and through its multitudinous harmonic laws. He denies that the Author of all this display of wisdom and love ever changes his programme in the minutest particular, and whimsically interposes to abolish his divine order, and substitute new ones as occasion requires. His will is as invariably displayed in the mote in the sunbeam as in the rolling of the globes through space—as changeless and eternal in the crucible of the chemist as in the decrees of the celestial heavens! The laws of Nature, as disclosed to us in all the sciences, are the outer expressions of the eternal harmonies of the Divine Mind—the great and infallible revelation of God to man, by the obedience to which "Scheme of Salvation," and in no other way, is he saved with an everlasting salvation! There is no coming at the divine favor by any other means than by the study and understanding of these laws, in all that concerns our life and happiness, and bringing ourselves into harmony with them. Science is intrinsically hostile to all special Providences, and declares that God interposes on no occasion, and answers no prayers or petitions, but in a scientific way—but through the order he has established. When that order is discovered—when we extend our knowledge of the laws of Nature in all the different spheres and departments that concerns our lives and happiness, we can not only rely upon them with absolute certainty, feeling assured that they will never, like the laws and institutions of men, be abolished, changed, or superseded; but we could then avoid all the million-fold woes that arise from our ignorance of them; for all the misery in the world arises from man's ignorance and disobedience to these laws. The ills of humanity, of all kinds, and everywhere, must be cured by removing the causes of them—by learning and obeying these laws. In other words, the world is redeemed and saved by science, and not by Holy Scriptures, and churches, and prayers, and penance, and peace-offerings. It is redeemed by facts, and not by theories and conjectures. Science is the ultimate, the external of the divine spiritual order, and that which we have to do with on earth to attain harmony and happiness, and the wider we extend the sphere of science, or, in other words, the more minute, particular, and perfect our knowledge of the various laws of Nature in its several departments becomes, the more we qualify and enable ourselves to live the harmonic life. Every thing has its science or system and economy of law, from the growth of a potato to the growth of a solar system, and all is patent for the observation and study of man. By the study of chemical law he learns the constituents of the various substances, solids, fluids, and gases which compose the bodies of things, the air and the elements, and how to test, decompose, and combine them to his advantage. By the study of meteoric law he learns how the winds, the tides, the rains, the storms, the droughts, the atmospheres, and the temperatures are regulated. By the study of agricultural law he learns how the barren places are made luxuriant, how the soil is made to yield abundantly the best kind of all the life-sustaining productions, and all the luxuries of earth. By the study of physiological law he learns how to correct and prevent all functional derangements, and how to preserve the physical organization in its harmony and integrity. By the study of health law he learns how to avoid sickness, contagion, and epidemics. And so forth of all the other sciences, to say nothing of the moral and spiritual effect of all this study and knowledge. The positivist is hence assured that the beneficent God of the universe, having eternally established this order, answers no prayers or petitions but in, by, and through it.

The supernaturalist or speculatist, on the other hand, accepts or contents himself with vague theories and conjectures as to the why and wherefore of the appearance of any extraordinary phenomena; and against most of the positive revelations of science sets up a fantastic creed or religious myth, and believes that God interposes when asked, and breaks through and troubles the harmony and uniformity of his established order to remedy special cases, which, from caprice, he may choose to care for, and which his primordial law did not reach! Thus we find him in times of drought praying for rain, and in times of rain and storm praying for fair weather.

Whereas, if he understood meteoric law, he might as well pray for snow to fall in summer, or the sun to rise at midnight! We hear them praying for fruitful harvests and abundant seasons, ignoring or disregarding the fact that they altogether depend upon the scientific knowledge and the industry of the husbandman, without which they might as well pray for God to carry the grist to mill and bring it home again! We hear them imploring God to avert his anger from them, and stay the cholera, the yellow fever, and other epidemics, while if they bore in mind that they were the results of violated health laws and conditions, and that the dark and pestilential alleys, the miasmatic marshes and swamps, meteoric derangement, and the filthy and leprous food and habits of the people were still unheeded, they might as well pray to be delivered from death after swallowing prussic acid. How often do we see the priest stand over the plague-stricken victim and implore God to interpose and save his life, while if he was acquainted with the health laws and conditions that immutably govern the result, and by and through which God speaks, he might as well pray for the African's skin to turn white or the leopard's spots to change!

Modern Spiritualism differs little herein from ancient supernaturalism, when tried by the test of positive knowledge or the light of science. They both proceed upon the same principle, repudiating the immutability and invariableness of natural law, and regarding Nature as the domain whereon the Gods or God display their arbitrary power and caprice. For instance, the Egyptian priests and astronomers, observing the periodical appearance of a flaming star over the source of the Nile, just preceding the rainy season, gave it the symbolic name of "the dog star," and believed that it was the messenger sent by the gods to herald the coming inundation, and celebrated it accordingly. Observing that during the spring or germinating season the constellation "Taurus," or the Bull, was in the ascendant, they conceived that that constellation, or the deity or the principle of which it was but the exponent, was connected with and presided over the fecundity of the earth, and they accordingly sought its favor by sacrifices and prayers, just as thousands of years afterward our modern supernaturalists pray for rain, fruitful seasons, and abundant harvests! Observing that during the hot and sultry season the constellation of the Scorpion was in the ascendant, they conceived that it was connected with the dearth and sterility of the humid season, and that its malignant influence and hot and poisonous breath parched and withered up the green earth, and bred plague, pestilence, and death, and they accordingly prayed and sacrificed to it to appease its anger and avert its malevolent influence from the earth, precisely as our modern supernaturalists do now pray that God may stay the cholera, yellow fever, small-pox, etc. We might trace the same supernaturalistic ideas and worship from Egypt to Greece, and throughout the Greek mythology (which is nothing but a vast, ingeniously interwoven and complicated system of supernaturalism), and show not only the analogy between the faith and worship of the ancient Greeks and the modern orthodox churches in a scientific point of view, but their obvious identity of principle. We might show that the prayers and sacrifices that then went up to the goddess Ceres for abundant harvests and fruits were the same that are now offered up for the like blessings, involving precisely the same supernaturalistic principle; that the prayers offered up to Neptune for successful voyages, or during marine disasters, were the same that are now made by the orthodox for the safety of the seafarers and during storm and shipwreck; that the prayers offered to Æsculapius for health during the prevalence of plague were the same which are now offered up to avert the cholera and yellow fever; and that the prayers offered up to Janus for the triumph of their battles were the same prayers that the English clergy are now (this very day) offering up for the success of their arms against the Russians! They alike contradict and overrule the established order, and affirm an agent or agencies above it, and independent of it, who arbitrarily interpose as caprice and interest may dictate, and, of course, will be always hostile to and opposed by the positive revelations of science. While the positivist claims that God answers no prayers but through his appointed means of established law; that he answers the mariner's prayer for a safe and prosperous voyage only through a stoutly-built barque, a well-rigged sail, a good compass, and skillful seaman; that He answers the husbandman's prayer for plenteous harvest only through his plow-handles, his harrows, his scythes, his rakes, his pitch-forks, his hoes, and his muck-piles; and that he answers the invalid's prayer for health only through the health-laws he has established. He believes in no Signior-Blitz-way of securing the Divine favor. His litany is of a vastly different sort. He believes that by the study and knowledge of God's will, as revealed to him by science, or in the harmonic laws of his universe, and the use of the means he has placed in his power, blessings will come without any further prayer; and unless he so obeys his laws, and uses these "*means of grace*," curses will come, though the earth be made vocal with prayers, and psalms, and hymns!

During the early history of the race the world was immersed in speculative knowledge. The people, ignorant and

credulous, explained the phenomena of Nature by wild conjectures and fantastic and absurd theories. Corresponding to the period of infancy, the inquisitive and imaginative faculties were predominant, and almost every explanation that was given them, or was suggested to their infantile fancy, was received as the truth. These explanations were elaborated into theological and religious systems; and although the vicissitudes of time have carried them through many mutations and transmutations, their myths have traced on to our times, and the prayers offered up on the banks of the Nile, thousands of years ago, for rain and for plenty, are substantially the same in principle as those offered up to-day at Trinity church! This was the *supernatural or imaginative* era. But afterward, when the wit of man became more developed, other faculties came into play, and they subtilized the phenomena and their explanations, and attempted to look into the *essential properties*—the *abstract entities* of things; and still credulous, they immersed the world in metaphysical jargon. This was the *abstract or metaphysical* era. Still, as the world grew and men developed, other faculties were brought into use, and science was born. They then began to study, discover, and examine the laws which regulated these phenomena. This was the dawning of the *positive* era. Auguste Comte, the "Bacon of the Nineteenth Century," who has studied the intellectual history of the world more thoroughly, perhaps, than any other man, claims to have discovered a fundamental law of this intellectual growth, which he calls "*The Law of Mental Evolution*," and as it has a direct bearing upon our subject, we will state it. He says:

"Every branch of knowledge passes successively through three stages. First—the *supernatural or fictitious*; second—the *metaphysical*; and third—the *positive or scientific*. The first is the necessary point of departure by human intelligence; the second is merely a stage of transition from the supernatural to the positive; and the third is the fixed and definite condition, in which knowledge is alone capable of progressive development.

"In the attempt made by man to explain the varied phenomena of the universe, history reveals to us, therefore, three distinct and characteristic stages—the *theological*, the *metaphysical*, and the *positive*. In the first, man explains phenomena by some fanciful conception, suggested in the analogies of his own consciousness; in the second, he explains phenomena by some *a priori* conception of inherent or superadded entities, suggested in the constancy observable in phenomena, which constancy leads him to suspect that they are not produced by any *intervention* on the part of any external being, but are owing to the nature of the things themselves; in the third, he explains phenomena by adhering solely to these constancies of suggestion and coexistence, ascertained inductively, and recognized as the *Laws of Nature*. Consequently, in the *theological* stage, Nature is regarded as the theater whereon the arbitrary wills and momentary caprices of superior powers play their varying and variable parts. In the *metaphysical* stage the notion of capricious divinities is replaced by that of *abstract entities*, whose modes of action are, however, invariable. In the *positive* stage the invariableness of phenomena, under similar conditions, is recognized as the sum total of human investigation, and beyond the laws which regulate phenomena it is considered idle to penetrate.

"Although every branch of knowledge must pass through these three stages in obedience to the law of evolution, nevertheless the process is not strictly chronological. Some sciences are more rapid in their evolutions than others; some individuals pass through these evolutions more quickly than others; so, also, of nations. The present intellectual anarchy results from that difference—some sciences being in the *positive*, some in the *supernatural or theological*, and some in the *metaphysical* stage; and this is further to be subdivided into individual differences; for in a science which, on the whole, may be admitted as being positive, there will be found some cultivators still in the metaphysical stage."

I see no reason to doubt this law of mental evolution. It is not inconsistent with the division I make of knowledge into positive and speculative, or theoretical; because the metaphysical or abstract stage of Comte is obviously included in the speculative division. It rests, like all other speculative knowledge, in theory and conjecture, nor can it ever be reduced to the positive grade, the abstract entities of things being beyond the reach of the human intellect.

Every man of thought, who is able clearly to trace the history of his own intellectual unfolding, from childhood to youth, and from youth to manhood, will see in himself a demonstration of this law of "mental evolution," for the history of the individual is but the miniature-type of the race, as the hour is but the miniature-type of the day. He can recollect the various stages or planes of development, and what his thoughts and motives were; what his states of mind; what his purposes, ends, and aims; his hopes and fears, while passing through each. During the ignorance and credulity of childhood, when all was wonder and mystery, his proverbial inquisitiveness was satisfied with any explanation, however wild and fantastic, of the many wonderful phenomena that surrounded him. If he is told or left to his own cogitations and conjectures, he ascribes them to the immediate agency of supernal powers; and, unable to trace connection and law in their manifestations, he believes that they are nothing but the displays of the arbitrary wills, caprices, and passions of a variety of deities or demons; then, finding in the analogies of his own nature the correspondent of these wills and passions, and believing that they have power to curse and destroy, or bless and preserve him, he seeks to avert their anger and secure their favor by gifts, presents, sacrifices, prayers, penance, etc. Hence, his earliest philosophy is a theology. He believes that God, or the gods, especially preside over and directly produce all the ap-

parently diverse phenomena of Nature, and he prays to him or them for rain in dry weather, health in sickness, plenty in scarcity, and for immunity from all manner of impending ill. The super-terrene and invisible character of these powers carries his imagination into the realm above, and he employs it in the creation and projection of a celestial economy, and peoples it with millions of fantastic hierarchies and orders, of which the antetypes are found on the earth around him! This is the history of the early years of every man of thought. His youth and early manhood are, however, marked by a different characteristic. He is then intent upon explaining every thing, not according to their law (for he has not yet reached that plane), but according to their essential properties. He becomes subtle and metaphysical, and tries to penetrate the causes and essences of phenomena, and searches for abstract entities, perpetual motions, universal solvents, elixirs of life, philosopher's stone, etc. But the progressive unfolding of his faculties brings him on to a still higher plane of intellectual development, and he begins to comprehend that phenomena and their succession are regulated by unchanging principles. He then employs his talent and genius in ascertaining those principles, recognizing their knowledge and operation in all the various departments of inquiry; as the ultimate and sum total of human investigations. The theology or demonology of his childhood, and the abstractions or metaphysics of his youth and early manhood, are then replaced by the soul-satisfying apprehension of a God of order, and the uniformity and harmony of his law-governed universe!

These three stages or degrees in the mental unfolding of the individual are conspicuous in the history of the race. The early ages were theological ages, in which the gods or super-terrestrial powers were plenty, and figured largely in all phenomena of the universe, and in all the affairs of nations, tribes, and men. They were the times in which originated the manifold theological systems, religious myths and traditions, many of which, undergoing the mutations and changes which all speculative ideas necessarily undergo with the changes of conditions, climates, people, habits, customs, and laws, have come down to our times; and are still respectable and orthodox in the middle of the nineteenth century! Then the succeeding ages were metaphysical ages, wherein men embarked their wits in the search for abstract entities, and bewildered learning and knowledge in metaphysical fogs and labyrinths, and filled the world with scholastic subtleties. Finally, the positive age broke upon us, and introduced into the world universal science, which reduces all phenomena to immutable law and order. Not that every nation, tongue, and people have advanced regularly in this order; by no means. Some nations and people have advanced faster than others; and some classes and individuals have advanced more rapidly than their nation or people. Galileo and his disciples, for instance, had reached the positive degree, while his nation was yet in the theological stage. Some nations, classes, or individuals may have been passing through the metaphysical stage, while others were yet in the theological, and others in the positive; just, perhaps, as we find it at this day. But the general progressive development of the race has observed this order, and those who are at all conversant with history will recognize the fact at once.

For the last half-century there has been an accumulation of scientific knowledge far beyond any thing of the kind in the past. There has been an advance in that species of knowledge which is certain, definite, and fixed, and which is the basis of all true progress and greatness, beyond any previous period. The modern philosopher, by confining his investigations to the laws which govern and control phenomena to the discovery and application of those principles that run through them, instead of idly conjecturing explanations, or vainly attempting to penetrate their "real issues," has immensely enlarged the circle of positive knowledge. He has, in the various sciences, which are but transcripts or classifications of natural phenomena, mapped out the unerring laws of their existence, and shed floods of light upon their uses, designs, and operations. Human inquiry has at last been turned in the right direction, and its legitimate object ascertained, namely, the discovery of the inherent laws of the multifarious phenomena of the universe. So in this age, every thing, no matter how sacred or profane, no matter whether temporal or spiritual, civil or ecclesiastical, and no matter how tremendous or unimportant the issues they involve, has been submitted to the test of scientific criticism and analysis, and their foundations in the laws of Nature, so far as the powers and appliances of man and their results are yet developed, have been definitely ascertained. The various systems and theories in religion, morality, politics, sociology, government, etc., originating in the theological and metaphysical ages, are fast giving way to principles, or the revelation of the inherent and eternal laws of things principally impressed upon them by their unchangeable Creator. The vast additions made to positive knowledge within the last half-century have dissipated the wonders and mysteries that heretofore hung over many subjects and phenomena, and dispelled the fears, and dreams, and delusions of the credulous supernaturalist. Science has arisen like a great sun upon the darkness of former ages, and the ghosts and hobgoblins of speculative belief at its dawn have hid them away to their congenial darkness, among classes and individuals yet in the theological stage of development. What havoc it has made with old systems of cosmology, astronomy, ethnology, archaeology, anthropology, astrology, mythology, and, indeed, with all super-naturalistic theories! What libraries of monkish superstition, dogmatic religion and theology, and scholastic subtleties it has quietly consigned to the silent Lethe of oblivion! Every kind of knowledge that still rests in speculation, theory, or conjecture is now regarded, as it ought to be, with suspicion and distrust, and is losing caste and consequence in the world. It has not the tremendous hold that it used to have on the minds of men. The spirit of the age tends strongly to scientific demonstration. Its great want is "stubborn facts," their analysis and scientific principles. A theory now, unless it is speedily followed up by facts and demonstrations, can not long humbug the people. Among the scientific and philosophic everywhere, there is now a pervading assurance that all things, from the least to the greatest, from the archangel of the celestial heavens to the grain of sand on the ocean shore, have their science or immutable law, expressing the divine will in each. And this assurance inspires in them a holy confidence in the permanency, constancy, and harmony of the divine economy. It excludes the idea of caprice and contingency from the universe, and assures us of a God of love and wisdom, of order and harmony, who adorably works out his eternal ends through eternal laws! and it proves that a God only of discord, of contradiction, and miracle—of wild impulse, lawless whim, and selfishness, can answer the impulsive, partial, and selfish prayers and petitions of tens of thousands of supernaturalist devotees!

But the realm of speculative knowledge is not confined exclusively to the conjectural explanations of theological problems, religious enigmas, and the mysteries of our origin, destiny, and final weal or woe. It obtains more or less in all the sciences, and in every branch of human inquiry and research. We have occupied thus much time and space with the consideration of speculative knowledge in the spheres of religion and theology, because they occupy a corresponding space in the minds of men. The creeds, theological systems, and religious beliefs still professed and preached, are almost exclusively speculative, and belong to the first and earliest stage of mental development. There are few tenets of the orthodox churches that have been authenticated by the positive revelations of science; while vast numbers of them have been completely exploded by them. And what seems to me an inexplicable contradiction in their pretensions, the discoveries of science, which affirm as true some of those tenets, such, for instance, as that man lives a spirit after death, that there is a spirit-world, that spirits good and evil can inflow and inspire mortals; that they communicate with man, etc., they utterly reject and deny. The sums total of speculative knowledge in the realms of theology and religion immensely outnumber and outweigh the conjectural knowledge of man in all other departments of inquiry, and the specialist is much more tenacious of them than of the systems and theories projected to explain the yet unknown laws of Nature in the various sciences. The reason, perhaps, is, that the former are looked upon as peculiarly God-revealed, infallible, and sacred, while the latter are only the idle excoigations of erring mortals. But this difference is a pure assumption, a theory devised to explain a problem in some of the every-day sciences, such as physiology, geology, or chemistry, is just as valid and sacred as a theory devised to explain the origin of evil, the immortality of the soul, the life after death, heaven and hell, or any other questions adjudicated by the religious sentiment. There is no available reason for any distinction. Theoretical knowledge is but theoretical knowledge, whether it deal with the divine nature, or with the manner of the growth of a blade of grass; and positive knowledge is positive knowledge, whether it marks with mathematical precision the distant returns of a comet or analyzes the components of a hair. They are broadly demarcated from each other, and more or less pervade every branch of human investigation—although in the theological and religious spheres, as I have before said, they claim almost exclusive sway. In astronomy there are theories to explain the yet unknown cause, laws, and purposes, of many astronomical appearances. In geology there are theories to explain the yet unknown problems as to the various changes and formations of the strata of the earth. In chemistry there are theories to explain the yet unknown laws and principles of many wonderful results. In physiology there are theories to explain the yet unknown laws, uses, and purposes of many functional adjustments. In psychology there are theories to explain the yet unknown laws and nature of many mental phenomena. Investigators in the various sciences in tracing out the laws, principles, and conditions which rule and explain their diverse phenomena, when they arrive at a point beyond which they are not yet able to proceed, often take out the explanation or system by a hypothesis. Whenever there is a hiatus or chasm in their exploration, conjecture comes in, and they bridge it over with a theory. There are many blanks in the sciences that are thus filled up by speculation. These theories have, like the sects in religion, their disciples and advocates, who war against and oppose each other with much stubborn bigotry and intolerance. But the prudent philosopher is he who carefully marks the point where certain knowledge terminates, and where theorizing begins. The disputed regions he merely regards as *terra incognita*, peopled by the imaginations of the explorers, and holds in abeyance all theories and conjectures, until by induction, observation, and analysis they are either exploded or become scientific verities.

Speculative belief is always and essentially contingent and mutable. It is at best but a mere temporary expedient, to be laid aside when the things it undertakes to explain are scientifically demonstrated. When it comes to speculating, every individual, if left to the free exercise of his own private judgment, in virtue of his very individuality, will conjecture differently. Hence speculative belief is, from its very nature, the source of infinite divergence and interminable discord. Hence it is the theater of manifold contradictions, sectarian zeal, controversies, disputes, and persecutions. It opens a wide field, where every individual who chooses may project a system or theory, and is wholly left to the guidance of his own imagination. It has no landmarks, no compass, no law. It gives us no guarantee or assurance of its continued reasonableness and plausibility, and apparent conformity to nature and law. It may change to-morrow, and next day again. No man is wise who stakes important issues upon it. It lacks that character of permanence and stability which is required to act upon, in the great affairs of life and death. In religious matters, it surpasses an arbitrary and capricious agent or agent, who are daily importuned to work miracles and to make it rain or shine, by the suspension or contradiction of established law. The world has been misled, deluded, and afflicted long enough by it, and now is our time of promise—the morning of a new day! Speculative knowledge is fast sinking into disrepute, and scientific knowledge ascending the throne. It is extending its empire to all things of man; for each and all things have their inherent, natural, and spiritual law, which to know and obey is life eternal, but which not to know or to disobey is death. The province of science is to search out those laws and principles, in all the various departments of life, and faithfully chronicle them for our application and observance. The redemption and salvation of the world—the peace, and harmony, and happiness, and final glory of the race, depend upon it. It is the study, the knowledge of and obedience to the outer expressions of the infinite harmonies of the divine love and wisdom—the knowledge of all-enduring and all-saving harmonic law, that will redeem, regenerate, and disenthral the human family. It will never ripen into a glorious and harmonic destiny upon abstract theories. It flourishes with an unequalled greenness, and beauty, and strength upon facts and their scientific principles. They are, in social order, politics, morals, and religion, and in all the relations and conditions of man, the only efficient and permanent basis of his prosperity. The scientific philosopher who investigates and teaches these laws, in every thing that concerns the well-being of the race; in the sciences and the arts; in man's material, moral, intellectual, passionate, and spiritual relations and concerns, is the true watchman on Zion's walls—is the true evangel of the gospel of the Christ. His prayers will never fail to be answered, for he is a priest after God's own heart—a priest forever after the order of Melchisedec.

August 18th, 1864.

SPIRITUAL TELEGRAPH.

S. B. BRITTAN, EDITOR.

"Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind."

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 4, 1864.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Albert Booth, of Springfield, Ill., and L. Hamrick, of Middletown, are respectfully informed that we have received their letter containing \$1, but unaccompanied by any definite direction as to who is the subscriber, or to what P. O. the paper is to be sent.

Owing to the length of Mr. Courtney's lecture, we have not space for our regular editorial leader. The reader has probably lost nothing by this circumstance, and may have gained much.

THE CAUSE IN THE FRATERNAL CITY.

At the solicitation of our Philadelphia friends we were there last Sunday, and addressed very large and intelligent audiences morning and evening. Notwithstanding there were spiritual meetings at two other places within the city, and its dependencies, the large and commodious Hall in Sanson Street, which will hold about one thousand persons, was well filled in the morning, and in the evening we believe there were no vacant seats. The people listened to what we had to offer with the most respectful and earnest attention.

We saw no indications of disorder among the friends in Philadelphia, and from all that we could perceive we feel authorized to conclude that

"Heaven's first law"

reigns in the City of Brotherly Love. The "free-love doctrines" have, however, created no disturbance there, and we learn that the people believe in "free-love" only in the great Divine and humanitarian sense.

The present aspect of the cause in Philadelphia is highly encouraging, and we derived great pleasure from our brief interview with the friends in that city, by whom we were received with the greatest cordiality. We met with several old and dear friends, and with many others whom we shall long remember. Our grateful acknowledgments are especially due to Dr. C. B. Foster and his esteemed lady, by whom we were most kindly entertained.

WORKING IN VACUUM.

In company with a friend the other day, we called to examine an invention by which a person is enabled to do certain things under a receiver after the vacuum is produced. This invention of Mr. Green is now on exhibition at Ryerson's, 100 Spring Street.

The distinctive nature of the invention consists in making an aperture in the receiver of the form of a socket, in which a ball is fitted to turn in every direction. By virtue of the form of this ball and socket, the aperture is hermetically closed. Now through this ball passes a rod so accurately fitted and packed, that it can be worked up and down without the air, and on account of its relation to the ball, can also be moved laterally in every direction. By this means several kinds of work may be done in space whence all atmospheric pressure has been exhausted. Fruits, pulse, meats, etc., can thus be preserved in their natural state, and with the certainty that their flavors will be preserved, since the work of sealing or soldering is done with facility.

This invention, it appears to us, bids fair to work a revolution in this whole department. It may, moreover, be applied in working the metals; and in chemical experiments, its results may be beyond human calculation, since a whole family of metals was discovered in a day by Sir H. Davy, with the imperfect arrangement he then employed.

A CANDID OPINION.

The *Portland Transcript*, edited by EDWARD H. ELWELL, is one of the best literary and miscellaneous papers in New England. The editor, if he does not fully believe in Spiritualism, has at least the intelligence to perceive the nature of its claims, and the justice to respect them. The following is extracted from an article which recently appeared in that journal. Speaking of the views and inculcations of the Spiritualists, the editor says:

"They teach that we ought to have a higher aim than the mere accumulation of wealth—that by kindness, charity, and benevolence—by the cultivation of every thing that tends to improve the social condition, enlarge and discipline the mental capacity, and refine the heart of man, are we progressive here and hereafter—that there is no such thing as a miraculous change of heart, but that the practice of doing our duty begets the love of it; 'custom becomes a second nature'; that there is no change at death, but that a man enters the Spirit-domain possessing the same peculiarities precisely that characterized him in life—the good, the just, and educated, the miserly, selfish, and dishonest, just as they were, each to reap his reward 'according to his works'—but that the power and opportunities for improvement in the after life are much more enlarged than in this.

And what creed, now preached from the pulpit, furnishes such inducements to lead a correct life as this—what creed is producing such glorious results among mankind as this, where it is known.

THE SPIRITS AND THE CATHOLICS.

The *Age of Progress*, Stephen Albro's new and excellent paper, published at Buffalo, N. Y., has the subjoined article under the editorial head. The Spirits will have their own way in defiance of Papal edicts. They have taken the great "beast" of Rome by the horns, and they will not let him go. When he does escape—should that ever occur—he will have been shorn of his power—he will be one of the "no-horned" kind.

Not having the fear of a Papal bull before their eyes, the Spirits in this city have invaded the sanctuary of Roman Catholicism. A lady who is a medium for spiritual communications, but not known to be such by the people into whose house the Spirits introduced themselves, went, by invitation, with a friend, to spend the afternoon and evening with a respectable Catholic family. When all were seated around the tea-table, the Spirits commenced rapping. No attention being paid to this, they commenced moving the table, turning it around, first one way and then the other, changing dishes and tea with the guests all around the board. The lady of the house asked her sister, who was present, if she was moving the table in that manner; and the question went round; but nobody had done it, and it still kept moving. At length it was whispered, by the friend of the medium, that it was Spirits. Then all with common consent appealed to the inevitable guests to declare themselves, if they were moving the table. Hereupon the raps commenced with unmistakable distinctness, giving the name of the Spirit, which was the deceased daughter of the hostess, who acknowledged herself convinced of the identity of her daughter's Spirit, and was affected to tears.

There was much more of an affecting nature, which we can not give without exposing the family to the wrath of the Papish priesthood, which we would by no means do as long as they remain in that connection, which we hope will not be long. When the company got through

with tea, they attempted to move the table, but the Spirits were not ready to have it moved, and they could not stir it. One tried, then two tried, then three; and at length five united their strength; but there stood the table, and they could not budge it. One lady's dress got under a leg of the table while it was moving, and they tried to raise the leg so that she could get it out; but it refused to be lifted. She succeeded, however, in drawing it out, and thereby released herself. Nothing could be done with it but to clear it off as it stood, and it remained there all night. In the morning they found it still fast to the floor; but on sitting around it, and putting their hands on it, the supporters were shoved in and the leaves let down by the Spirit, and it became movable. These facts can be substantiated by indubitable testimony, if, at this day, doubts still remain in people's minds as to the truth of such manifestations.

THE TELEGRAPH AND THE TRIBUNE.

The following communication is from a distinguished literary gentleman who is already widely known as an author. At his particular request we give it a place in our columns, but can not consent to be held responsible for any opinions which either our correspondent or the editor of the *Rhode Island Freeman* may express or entertain, in reference to this particular subject.

MR. EDITOR:

You will confer a favor on many readers of the *New York Tribune*, and also of your own journal, by giving place to the subjoined editorial extract from the *Rhode Island Freeman* of Oct. 7th, a well-known and influential press. It embodies, in a terse and pointed paragraph, the opinion of a large class of the readers of the first-named paper concerning the merits of the recent "passage at arms" between the author of "Ghost Literature" in the *Tribune* and the *Spiritual Telegraph*. The course of the *Tribune* with reference to Spiritualism, however it may meet with favor from the unprogressive and sectarian classes (who generally are not its patrons), meets with little sympathy from a large class of progressive minds in New England, who from its commencement have been its warm supporters.

FROM THE RHODE ISLAND FREEMAN.

S. B. Brittan, in the *Spiritual Telegraph* of last week, takes hold of one of the editors of the *New York Tribune* and nearly throttles him to death. The *Tribune* some weeks ago, under the head of Ghost Literature, charged Spiritualism with the free-love doctrines of Dr. Nichols and S. P. Andrews. When challenged for his proof, the *Tribune* quoted Adin Ballou. This was the *Tribune's* principal and only witness; and this witness, as Mr. Brittan shows, testifies that "comparatively few Spiritualists have become aware of this free-love development." The *Tribune* with all its ability and excellent qualities as a public journal, displays now and then some of the infirmities common to human nature. Its obvious prejudice against Spiritualism leads it to say many foolish things, which it will some day be ashamed of.

The Lectures at Dodworth's Academy on Sunday were largely attended, both morning and evening, the Hall being full on both occasions, though the day was stormy, and the general attendance at the churches but small. Rev. T. L. Harris discoursed in the morning on the Divine Element in Spiritualism, and in the evening on Spiritual Facts in their Relations to Spiritual and Humanitarian Science. Bro. H. will lecture on Sunday next. The friends who desire seats should be early in their attendance.

SPIRITUAL SOCIETY IN BROOKLYN.—We learn that last Sunday, the Spiritualists in Brooklyn, co-operating with Rev. U. Clark and lady, organized a society for the promotion of the Spiritual cause in that city.

We are requested to say that next Sunday morning at 10 o'clock, a meeting of all the friends is invited at the Hall, 163 Fulton Street, to confer in regard to measures of much moment. Public services at 3 P.M. The Sunday evening meetings are withheld for the present, and week-day evening lectures will commence soon.

DIGEST OF CORRESPONDENCE.

Dr. J. WEBB, of Union city, Alameda County, California, writes us concerning the unkind treatment which he had received from a brother clergyman in consequence of his (Dr. W.'s) having forsaken the old land-marks of theology and adopted the spiritual philosophy. We can only remind our friend that several others have been treated in a similar way for doing the same thing, though we know not that this reflection will afford him much consolation. It was the rule of the Great Shepherd, when a lamb had strayed from the flock, to go and seek diligently until he found it, and then place it upon his shoulder and gently carry it back to the fold. The modern degenerate shepherds of Israel, however, when a lamb strays away from what they deem the true flock, hunt it down by the bloodhounds of bigotry, and then if it won't go back of itself, lacerate its flesh and strip off its wool, and leave it in the desert naked, wounded, and half dead—a prey to wild beasts. Here is a contrast, it must be confessed.

The volume of hymns of which our correspondent sends us a few specimens, may subserve a useful purpose hereafter, but in our judgment its publication would be premature at present.

Mr. SILAS LAMB, of Scriba, Oswego Co., N. Y., "whose locks have been whitened by the snows of seventy-six winters," sends a subscriber, and writes in an enthusiastic manner of the new spiritual light which the modern phenomena have shed upon his declining years. He finds in the present unfoldings "another golden link in the everlasting chain of events, mingling its strength and beauty with all former revelations, the great book of nature not excepted." Quite a number of mediums are in process of development in his neighborhood, and he sends us a specimen of the communications that are occasionally given through them. The communication, however, seems to have been mostly intended for those who received it, and not so much for the world at large; and the present crowded state of our columns seems to forbid its publicity.

J. M. R., of Portland, Fountain County, Ind., writes some free thoughts concerning the spiritualistic cause, and various features of the opposition. He specifies, in serial order, the various concessions and assumptions of the opposers, for the purpose of showing that their antagonism is based upon "priestcraft, prejudice, and superstition." Our correspondent also offers some heartily appreciative remarks in reference to the character and course of the *TELEGRAPH*; but we have not room for a further notice of his article.

E. SAMSON, of Ypsilanti, Mich., writes us an account of the discovery of lost money by Spirits, the essential particulars of which are as follows: On the 24th of August last, Mrs. L., of that village, went out shopping, and on the evening of the same day discovered that she had lost her purse, containing some thirty-six dollars. The ground over which she had passed during the day was retraced, the shops where she had been were revisited, and diligent inquiry and search were made for the missing treasure, but it was not to be found. The

search was renewed on the next morning, but with no better success. Finally, despairing of the recovery of the purse by any merely human means, recourse was had to the Spirits, by whom the lady was informed that she had dropped her purse inside the door-yard of her house, between the gate and the door. They searched for the missing article at the place indicated, and soon found it by the side of the path, partly covered up with grass and leaves.

THE FACULTY OF PRESENTIMENT.

We have already published a "digest" of a letter of the author of the following (who is a California miner), in which he mentioned the fact that he was guided in his mining operations by impressions received in his sleep concerning the productive-ness or unproductiveness of any particular spot fixed upon for an excavation. In the following communication, which the philosophic mind will read with interest, our correspondent endeavors to give the theory of the presentiment by which he professes to be guided.

MR. EDITOR:

I stated to you in my first letter, that it was not a conscious foreknowledge by which that sentiment (an impression of the future) was written, but that there appeared to be an unvarying certainty in the effects of some influence which is at times exerted upon the mind. The condition in which this influence is developed, is the state of natural sleep. From investigation it appears that the human organism is composed of two sets of nerves, which may be termed positive and negative. The positive nerves are those that are the mediums of consciousness in all exterior relations; while the negative are only concerned in the production of all involuntary and unconscious motion throughout the animal economy. Now the wakeful state is the repose state of the insensible nerves, while the sleeping condition is the reposing condition of the positive, or nerves of sensation; in the latter condition the previously negative becomes the positive principle, and is the direction from which sensation flows: that is, the mind acts outwardly, it being the third or inner principle, while in the wakeful state the direction of sensation is from the external or outward to the internal. Hence in that state, all things external being in a positive relation to the mind, the impressions will be as the condition from which they are produced.

Now since the external nerves are acted upon by external objects in a positive degree, it were impossible that the negatives or inner degree should be any thing more than in a receptional relation to the positive nerves. But when the state of sleep exists, then a reverse action has taken place, and impressions are passing from within outward. But as they are still under the influence of the outward impressions, the negative influence is but feeble in its impressions on those nerves; hence we remember but little of what passes in the mental chamber during the hours of repose. And further, as the language of the negative is of one character, while that of the positive is of another, there must necessarily be a difficulty in comprehending the characters that are so often found imprinted upon the external nerves when consciousness is restored.

The negative nerves correspond to effects, while the positive correspond to causes; if the former perceive effects, and the latter perceive only causes as the momentary passing events; hence while the latter are in full action, they can not form an impression of any effect then being produced; but in the state of reflex or sleep, the effect becomes in turn a cause, and a judgment is given by an impression then produced from the effect upon the negative nerves; which causes the foundation or imputation of the reality upon the external or the then passive and receptive nerves. The mind being prompted to actions upon the positive nerves by outward or the present objects, it can not at that moment act independently upon the negative nerves in a positive relation, else it were acting with an equal force in opposite directions. But let the positive nerves be in repose, then they are negative to the mind, and as a consequence, impressions of coming events are formed upon those nerves, which, when aroused to a positive state still remain fixed, so as to be recognized by the mind as if they had been produced from the actual existence of the event; or a similar reason, that, if we look steadily at a brilliant object and then close the eyes, the image of the thing seen is distinct, as if the light continued to flow into the eye.

This theory affords matter for much speculation, which will terminate in the establishment of the existence of a principle in the mind not heretofore known, and by virtue of which the mind can as readily live in the reality of the future, as in the reality of the past. For events or causes which are sensible, sustain the same relation to the mind as effects or future events; for one and the same relation must be established in the mind, prior to the perception of the reality of the past or future. Such being the case, it were as easy for one to live in the reality of the future, however distant, as in the present. It is possible, however, to know only those things for which the mind has a sympathy or which it has a positive tendency to know.

This mental principle will sooner or later be fully realized to be true; and will become a certain guide in all momentous movements in individual life. For example, in the present case, how advantageous it was to foreknow the result of my trip to this country, which was not only to get gold by mining for it, but to fully establish the certainty of the existence of such a principle which was developed in me prior to starting, during natural sleep! The Spirits said, "You will have success in California," giving me an impression of some of the events that would occur on the way, which did occur, and to all appearance will be fulfilled to the letter.

Yours for truth,

D. N. COOK.

SPIRITUALISM AND THE TELEGRAPH.

MR. LAWSON RUSYON, writing from Hot Springs, Arkansas, speaks thus of the *TELEGRAPH* and the cause it advocates:

I have had the pleasure of reading your soul-cheering, hope-reviving *Spiritual Telegraph* for several months weekly. Before I met with the *TELEGRAPH*, I had read in the papers accounts of the spiritual "humbug," written by its opponents, and had supposed it to be a most pitiful and barefaced imposition upon the credulity of the weak-minded and fanatical; and when I saw an account that a weekly paper was established to advocate and defend the doctrine of spiritual intercourse, I at once concluded it was got up by some unprincipled fanatic or knave who discovered that he could make money by the publication. So the matter rested in my mind until by accident one number of the *Spiritual Telegraph* fell into my hands. I hardly thought I should have the patience to read much of its contents; still I was disposed to read enough to see the drift and bearing of the principles advocated. A perusal of that number opened my eyes to the truth, and caused an entire revolution in my opinion concerning the humbug. In that number I learned that Judge Edmonds was a believer in the doctrine of Spiritualism. I also saw your comments on the intolerant and prosperous spirit of the opposition toward him for his sincerity and honesty. This alone was enough to enlist my feelings for him, and before I had read through one number of the *TELEGRAPH* I prophesied publicly that Spiritualism would revolutionize the Christian world. For instead of a servile truckling to fanatical prejudice, and a dogmatical advocacy of some wild and marvelous *ism*, I found an independent, high-toned journal advocating the largest and broadest liberty, proclaiming the absolute freedom and independence of mind, and asserting truths and principles which needed but to be named to be admitted by every intelligent and enlightened mind. I felt that the fetters of superstition and intolerant dogmatism would be stricken from many an honest but priest-ridden mind.

To find a journal of such a character, conducted by editors of such evident honesty, liberality, intelligence, and ability, was to me indeed a happy discovery; and furthermore, my convictions of the effects that Spiritualism would have upon the various religious dogmas now taught by the different sects, arose from the liberal, rational, and self-evident truths and doctrines advocated by Spiritualists, more than from any faith in their spiritual origin.

Although my mind has long been at rest with dogmatical theology, yet still I must say my happiness has been increased, and I enjoy a hope beyond the grave which I hardly possessed before I became a reader of your journal. I have taken some pains to awaken an interest in the minds of others in relation to the subject of Spiritualism; we have not yet been so fortunate as to have seen any manifestations, but all who have read your paper admit the force and beauty of the doctrines taught through the mediums, and seem to feel an interest in the matter. The spiritual doctrine advocates all that is lovely and beautiful in the common theology, and denounces all its frightful absurdities and deformities.

FACTS AND REMARKS.

PHYSIOGNOMY OF A SPIRITUAL CIRCLE.—We have just casually dropped in to a spiritual circle of Catharine Fox, at 658 Broadway. We witnessed no astounding demonstrations, such as often occur in her presence, but the scene which presented, and the general proceedings of the session were such as we think ought at least to have greatly diminished the skepticism of any candid and observant materialist who might have been present. Some twenty persons were present, of all ages and both sexes, and apparently of very diverse mental idiosyncrasies and degrees of education. Some were full believers, others doubting and cautious inquirers, and one or two were apparently confirmed skeptics. Every thing forbade the supposition of an intended conspiracy, or even unconscious concurrence of thought and action, for the production of any regular series of results, either favorable or unfavorable to the spiritualistic theory. There was evidently a disposition on all hands to let the manifestations take their own natural course, and work out their own results without the prompting of friends or the obstruction of foes; and the whole thing wore such an open, honest countenance, that one could scarcely have refused to give it the credit of at least believing that it was all it professed to be. The *tout ensemble* of the proceedings, moreover, wore an aspect so much like truth, that the attentive observer could not have failed to be impressed that there was an element of reality in it somewhere, rendering it worthy of the profoundest attention of the investigating mind.

When we entered the room, a lady was *silently* writing questions upon a slip of paper, so held that the medium could not see what was written. These were generally responded to by affirmative and negative answers, which the questioner said were correct. Presently, however, a signal was heard for the alphabet, which being called, the sentence was spelled, "My dear child, I do love you still." The lady then showed the question she had written, which was, "Do you love me still?" Directly afterward the alphabet was called again, when it was spelled, "Yes, I know you love me." The lady then showed her secretly-written question, which was, "Do I love you?" The appropriateness of these answers could hardly have been the result of a guess, and certainly they could not have been clairvoyantly perceived by the medium, whose attention was at the time absorbed in another way.

TRANCE OF THOMAS SAY.—Thomas Say, a distinguished Quaker and most excellent man, was born in Philadelphia in the year 1709. During his life he had many remarkable spiritual experiences, of which the following is one: During a severe fit of palsy, when about seventeen years of age, he fell into a trance, and for several hours was thought by his friends and physician to be dead. He, however, subsequently revived, and related that he had witnessed beatific visions, and heard voices of men, women, and children singing in the most ravishing strains of praise to God. He mentioned that, during his trance, he had also seen three men die, and related all the circumstances attending their several deaths. Two of those persons being acquaintances of the parties to whom his story was related, they sent immediately to inquire whether they had really died, and under those circumstances. They were found to have actually died at that very time, and every item in the attending circumstances as related by Say was fully confirmed. The third person was a negro belonging to the widow Kearney. Some time after the recovery of Say, the widow K. sent for him to inquire whether he thought that departed Spirits knew one another. He answered her in the affirmative, and then told her he saw her negro man die while he was in a trance. She asked him, "Where did he die?" He answered, "In the brick kitchen between the jamb of the chimney and the wall, and that when they took him off the bed to lay him on the board, his head slipped out of their hands." This the old lady acknowledged was true. In answer to further inquiries, Say said that they had then laid the negro between the back door and the street door. Mrs. K. said she did not remember that; but when Say added that they had only laid him there while they swept under the window where they afterward laid him, she said it was all perfectly true. Say described the Spirits of these persons as possessing the perfect human form, though he saw their physical bodies at the same time, the walls being no obstruction to his sight.

A PERIPATETIC TABLE.—A gentleman, from Utica was in our office a few days ago, and related the following singular fact, which had come to his personal knowledge, to Bro. T. L. Harris, who is acquainted with him, and has entire confidence in his word: A gentleman in Utica died some months ago, leaving to widowhood a wife who had most tenderly loved him. The widow in her affectionate grief was afterward in the habit of going every day to the closet where her deceased husband's clothes hung, and handling and kissing them in affectionate tenderness. After she had continued this practice for some time, she received, through a medium, a communication from the Spirit of her husband, directing her to remove his clothes from the closet and carry them up into the garret. She proceeded to comply with the request, and on gathering up the clothes and starting with them for the garret, a small table that was standing near her took a notion to accompany her. Keeping at a certain distance from her person, it walked along behind her, ascending the stairs and entering the garret room, and apparently knowingly, and with an air of surveillance looked on the act of depositing the clothes in a suitable place. After this was done, the lady turned and descended the stairs, when the table again followed her as before; and entering the room from which it had started, it gave itself a good shake, as if to indicate its satisfaction with what had just occurred, and then became quiet.

A REMARKABLE DREAM AND CURE.—In another paragraph we have briefly alluded to the history and remarkable spiritual experiences of Thomas Say, the Quaker. We may here add that Say possessed extraordinary gifts of healing, both by medication and manipulation; and these were called into requisition once in the following remarkable manner: A young woman who lived some distance from Philadelphia, where Say resided, had long been grievously afflicted with epileptic fits, from which physicians could afford her no relief. She dreamed one night that a person appeared to her and informed her that if she would go to the city and make application to one Thomas Say, she would be cured of her fits by medicines which he would prescribe. Though this impression was deep, she treated it merely as a common dream, until some time afterward the person who gave her the advice appeared to her in another dream and upbraided her for not following his directions. She excused herself by saying that she had no means to go to the city, and that she did not know the road, never having been there, and also that she was not acquainted with the man. She thought that her adviser then left her, but presently returned with two horses, one of which she mounted and he the other, and they both together rode to the city, and to the house of Say, when after seeing the man she awoke. The next morning she communicated her dreams to some of her friends, and shortly afterward a young man came to the door with two horses, which she identified with those she had seen in her vision. She mounted the one she dreamed she had rode, and he the other, and the two thus rode to the city, she anticipating the appearance of the road all the way. Arriving at the city, they went directly to the house of Say, whom the young woman recognized from her previous dream; and on making known her business he gave her some medicine which she took, and never afterward had a fit.

THE SPIRITS ABOUT LONG BEARD.—At a recent session of a circle of intelligent Spiritualists in this city, who are in the habit of receiving communications apparently from high sources, conversation turned upon the offices and uses of the human beard. One argued that the beard and hair should never be cut; another that there was no more impropriety in shaving the beard closely than there was in cutting the nails; another argued that both beard and hair might be properly clipped when their length became inconvenient. After these interchanges of thought the Spirits called for the alphabet and spelled a communication to the effect that the beard and hair perform electric or magnetic functions having relation to the universal sense of touch, and more especially to the spiritual offices of that sense; and that they might safely be kept at the length of three inches, but can never be cut shorter than that without injury. Since this communication was given, several of the barbed gentry, and *Monsieur Moinme* among the number, imagine that they actually have now more courage to face, attack, and subdue that the reaction from which previously caused unpleasant sensations upon the externals either of body or mind. We may find in this a philosophical reason for the fact, that the soldier in cultivating courage, manifests also a natural tendency to cultivate the beard and mustache, and why so many of the mental soldiers who, in the cultivation and exercise of a far higher courage, engage in the existing revolutionary war of ideas, instinctively do the same thing.

Original Communications.

SPIRIT-LOVE.

BY AUGUSTINE DUGANNE.

Tell me, ye who long have threaded
All the mazes of the heart,
Are not life and death still wedded,
Each of each a part!

Once a gentle form before me
Shed a light around my soul;
Holy eyes were bending o'er me,
Music through my spirit stole.
Once my inmost life was plighted
Pondily with a saint on earth,
Like two music-notes united—
Notes that sever in their birth.

Yet not severed we, though parted,
Still in truth our souls are one;
Though on earth the gentle-hearted
Hath her blessed mission done.
Still for me in sweet communion
Lives the form that seemeth dead.
Love was once our chain of union,
Still with love our souls are wed.

In the spirit's tranquil vesper,
When the prayer of love ascends,
Comes a soft, responsive whisper,
With my voiceless musing blends;
Then as earth's dim shadows faintly
Flit and from mine eyes depart,
Dwells with me a presence saintly,
Dove-like folded near my heart.

Tell me, then, ye spirit-seeing,
Is it truth the angel saith?
Is not love the chain of being—
Love the lord of death!

THE SPIRIT BIRD.

The following lines were received by me while thinking of a sweet little daughter now in the Spirit-world. I was always in the habit of calling her my "little bird;" and she, when asked her name, would reply that she was her "father's bird."

TO MARY, "MY BIRD."

'Twas better for thee, dear bird of my soul,
To depart at the dawning of life;
Thou art nearer to heaven, thy ultimate goal,
Than if living 'mid sorrow and strife.

Being called away for a few moments, I found on my return the following response, written through the hand of Mrs. C.:

Thy sweet little Mary still lives in that home
Where the music of angels is heard,
Oh, do not recall her to earth and its gloom,
Though soaring toward heaven she still is thy bird.

ROCHESTER, Sept., 1851.

H. M. R.

THE DEATHS OF JEFFERSON AND ADAMS.

MR. EDITOR:

The interesting reminiscences connected with the deaths of these illustrious patriots, of which your Illinois friend treats in the *TELEGRAPH* of to-day are indeed well calculated to arouse the inquiry, whether such august and impressive coincidences as these are nothing more than blind fantastic accidents, or the significant and ordered effects of a governing and intelligent higher cause?

The historical facts which your correspondent brings to mind in a new and strong light, suggests also, to me, the existence of a certain passage in the volume entitled *Philosophy of the Spirit-World*, which has a direct bearing on the question involved—i. e., Was the remarkable "coincidence" in the deaths of Jefferson and Adams, on the same day, and that day the FOURTH OF JULY, a mere result of chance, or an event disposed by higher influences? The book alluded to purports to have been written by Spirits, through the mediumship of Rev. Charles Hammond, of Rochester. Of its claims to a spiritual origin I will not now speak, further than to remark, that it is a volume which *few men in the body* could have produced under any circumstances, and one which contains a good deal of truth and philosophy, stated in a manner wholly original. But the passage referred to—if we accept it as a revelation from the spiritual world—throws some light on the very subject of the seemingly miraculous deaths of Jefferson and Adams.

THOMAS PAINE is the Spirit who writes through the hand of Mr. Hammond. He says:

"By an arrangement between myself and William Penn, it was agreed that I should visit Thomas Jefferson, and he would visit John Adams. Our object was to invite them to the capital of the United States upon their entrance into this sphere, which we knew was near at hand. I saw Jefferson, with whom I had sympathized in his elevation to the presidential chair, enter into his new life, and William witnessed the release of John Adams from his earth-sphere. Neither had much confidence in meeting again, until the realities of this sphere broke upon their minds. It was the nation's birthday, and when I reached the hall of representatives with my friend, we waited the coming of William and his friend, which was about one hour."

"Paine [to Jefferson].—I know what you want, and will proceed to state facts which have not yet been revealed to you. I saw you both when in the body, and William and myself were with you often. We agreed to invite you to this hall when you should enter this sphere. It was our wish to prolong your residence in the body, and we made what exertions were necessary to lengthen your rudimentary days; but seeing nature wasting your strength, and your days becoming wearisome to you, we RELINQUISHED OUR EFFORTS ON THIS NATIONAL BIRTHDAY, and you yielded up your spirits into our hands. The transition was attended with no pain to either of you, for nature is not capable of inducing wretchedness."—[*Philosophy of the Spirit-World*, chap. ii., pp. 50, 51.]

Here, then, we have indeed "a confirmation that heaven itself mingled visibly in the celebration of American Liberty, hallowing anew the day by a double apotheosis."

Well may your correspondent say, "They were great and glorious in their lives; in death they were not divided." * * * Happening singly, each of these events was felt as supernatural; happening together, the astonishment which they occasioned was general and almost overwhelming."

How it thrills the heart to realize the startling truth, that the identical immediate air in which we move, and breathe, and have our being, is oftentimes, unawares to us, peopled with the celestial forms of those that are disembodied! How suggestive is the thought, that there is

"A Divinity that shapes our ends,
Rough-hew them as we will!"

WASHINGTON, October 14th, 1854.

* There would appear to be some mistake here as to time. Jefferson is generally believed to have taken his departure some four hours before Mr. Adams ceased to breathe.

* For the purpose of reviewing and analyzing the Constitution, which object is at once carried into effect, by a method of criticism on the part of Paine, as bold and searching as it is unprecedented. It is an exposition of what may be termed emphatically "the Higher Law."

LAW OF MENTAL IMPRESSIONS.

FORESTOWN, BUTTE COUNTY, CAL., Sept. 25, 1854.

MR. EDITOR:

Dear Sir—From my last letter* it must be apparent that an impression can exist in the negative degree, being produced from the mind, and yet not produce a like effect upon the positive nerves; as, also, that while the positive nerves are in a state of repose, an impression may flow from the mind, and appear as if the effect were actually in the relation of cause, or from the outward world; which impression may be from the mind of the individual or from a spiritual individuality. Hence, to discern the reality, the positive nerves must be aroused to action. Then a consciousness exists expressive of the reality, which is that it did not flow from an outward cause, but from a relation that exists between the mind and an effect, which corresponds in its relation to the mind; i. e., the effect and cause are seen to have the same relation to the production of the same thoughts in the mind, which gives the appearance of a reality. Hence, the mind, by living in the same relation to things or effects not yet fulfilled that the positive nerves do to transpiring events, all departments of the human organization are brought into the reality of effects, however distant, and a transfer of future things, as it were, is thus daguerreotyped. Night, being the negative part of life, and day the positive, and as the positive nerves cease their action at death, then the mind must act only upon the negative nerves; which nerves must sustain the same relation to the mind that the positive nerves did: and the individual then lives as a positive being in his relation to the elements around him. Now, it is plain to see why spiritual impressions flow through the individual without any but a logical consciousness of their origin; and that we may often be influenced to do things which we would not have done, except by that influence, and not even think but that the cause of the action lay within ourselves, and to determine the cause of the actions necessitates a reposing condition of the positive nerves; then the occurrence goes on in the mind as if the reality also existed, which becomes known or impressed upon the positive nerves. But you ask, Of what utility is such a knowledge of the human organization? I answer, it will lead him to seek the reposing condition of the positive nerves, a sure guide to the knowledge of all important transactions in the individual life, and that things invisible become as things visible when the mind in calmness looks forth from its chamber upon the distant future. It also teaches us that man has the capacity to know and be guided into any channel which will result in the end desired to reach, however distant.

For it is by that mental quality that Spirits live in the prophetic reality of the millions of ages in advance of their own period of being, and an eternity becomes as a moment, and a moment as an endless period of living realities, and that any end for which the individual has a ruling sympathy to gain can be gained with unerring certainty, which imparts to the mind a positive or conscious pleasure in the reality of the end before it, as it reads the long list of events that must intervene prior to the acme sought. Oh, transporting thought indeed! the mind at once exclaims when such a light bursts forth from the mists of eternal, chaotic darkness upon the new born era of its life. Ah! methinks I feel the pure ethereal light already darting with infinite quickness through my mental channels, so long overshadowed in the cold, bleak covering of materiality. Does not the clear enlivening whisperings of angel spirits, bespeak the dawning of a new being of immortal youth and beauty? and is there not a soul-enchancing theme now pictured to its senses, that we may live in that light forever? Universal nature! can such a law of being exist in thee? Is there such a proviso in man's immortal being? If so, let truth awake and sing her eternal chorus. I have commenced an experiment for the location of gold, having its basis on the theory laid down in my former letters, i. e., when the external conditions and relations are in harmony with the legal requirements of the mind, then it (the mind) can act with a certainty through these relations, so as to fulfill its own requirements or desires. But in this case, you ask, why the same intelligence, that can locate gold by a scientific arrangement through a medium, can not direct that medium to the same location, simply by an influence on the mind, similar to the impartation of an intelligent thought? I answer, that the mind moves with a much less conscious force in a direction adapted to its own movements, than when that movement was apparently contrary to its own consciousness, which in this case would be more or less true; and farther, all relations must be set aside, which would call into action the affections and will force; hence we will seek a circle and a radius, with figures so arranged on the radius and circle as to express a relative with perfect ease, or that will be to each other as the harmony of music; then the mind can give an expression to its wants, in keeping with its own organic laws. Experiment, so far as it has been tested, appears to hold good, and of course, action shall not be wanting to carry the experiment to its acme.

Yours, etc.,

D. M. COOK.

* The letter to which our correspondent alludes will be found on the opposite page.

WOMAN'S LOVE.

BY LUCINDA HILL, MEDIUM, AGED 14 YEARS.

A woman's love, deep in the heart,
Is like the violet flower
That lifts its modest head apart
In some secluded bower;
And blest is he who finds that bloom—
Who sips its gentle sweets;
He needs not life's oppressive gloom,
Nor all the care he meets.

A woman's love is like the rock
That every tempest braves,
And stands secure amid the shock
Of ocean's wildest waves;
And blest is he to whom repose
Within its shade is given;
The world with all its cares and woes
Will be to him a heaven.

SONNET.

BY JON.

'Tis said that what we do in these few years
Of this earth's life, makes life for us in spheres
Of life to come. This inner life of ours,
Evolved and generated in the hours
Of this earth's time, arises like incense
To make a new life for us, free from sense;
And so we shall enact all glorious thought
That we do have, and find our dreams are brought
From a real home—anticipations were,
And not delusions, as cold mortals dare
To call them; Imagination! Fancy!
These are of future spheres the prophecy!
And all that Poets sing of life and love,
Are expectations of our life above.

TO ONE DEPARTED.

The day is done; the meadow-rills
Murmur a soft and lonely tune,
And large and pale the lustrous moon
Slides upward o'er the eastern hills.

The twilight fields are brown and dim;
It is the hour I love the most;
Oh, sainted mother, loved and lost!
Be near me; listen to my hymn.

Albeit within the upper sphere
Resound divinest lyres than mine,
The echoes float from mine to thine
Through love, for love is everywhere—

And that within my bosom knows
No change, for tears of sorrows might
But beautify and make it bright,
As rain-drops beautify a rose.

Above thy grave the grass is grown;
Above thy grave the robin sings;
The phantom years on shadow-wings
Sweep on, and bear me to my own!

He who lamenteth but a friend,
May find another in an hour,
With larger sympathetic bound
Than his, whose star he saw descend.

But he who mourns a mother dead,
No voice so kind as hers he hears;
The loss he feels through all his years,
Is such as never may be said!

Ring out, sad lyre, in softer chords,
And let the mournful numbers flow!
Let music speak that deeper woe,
That finds no place in common words!

I find it pleasant to believe
That Spirits from thy holy sphere
May sometimes mingle with us here,
And lead us upward when we leave.

Oh, in the tumult and the roar,
When all the horizon is dark,
Conduct and guard my wand'ring barque
Until I strike the starry shore!

Thus when my mortal voyage shall cease,
My soul, lone watcher, may behold
The heavenly city's gates of gold,
The palms and pinnacles of peace!

HENRY.

DR. DODDRIDGE'S DREAM.

Dr. Doddridge was on terms of very intimate friendship with Dr. Samuel Clarke, and in religious conversation they spent very many happy hours together. Among other matters, a very favorite topic was the intermediate state of the soul, and the probability that, at the instant of dissolution, it was not introduced into the presence of all the heavenly hosts, and the splendors around the throne of God. One evening, after a conversation of this nature, Dr. Doddridge retired to rest, with his mind full of the subject discussed, and in "the visions of the night," his ideas were shaped into the following beautiful form:

He dreamt that he was at the house of a friend, when he was suddenly taken dangerously ill. By degrees, he seemed to himself to grow worse, and at last to expire. In an instant, he was sensible that he had exchanged the prison-house and sufferings of mortality for a state of liberty and happiness. Embodied in a slender aerial form, he seemed to float in a region of pure light. Beneath him lay the earth; but not a glittering city or village, the forest or sea, was visible. There was naught to be seen below, save the melancholy group of his friends, weeping around his lifeless remains. Himself thrilled with delight, he was surprised at their tears, and attempted to inform them of his happy change, but by some mysterious power, utterance was denied; and as he anxiously leaned over the mourning circle, gazing fondly upon them, and struggling to speak, he rose silently upon the air, their forms became more and more indistinct, and gradually melted away from his sight. Reposing upon golden clouds, he found himself swiftly mounting the skies, with a venerable figure at his side, guiding his mysterious movements, and in whose countenance he remarked the lineaments of youth and age were blended together, with an intimate harmony, and majesty, and sweetness. They traveled together through a vast region of empty space, until at length the battlements of a glorious edifice shone in the distance; and as its form rose brilliant and distinct among the far-off shadows that flitted athwart their path, the guide informed him that the palace he beheld for the present was to be his mansion of rest. Gazing upon its splendors, he replied, that while on earth he had often heard that it could not enter into the heart of man to conceive the things which God had prepared for those who love him; but, notwithstanding, the building to which they were then rapidly approaching was superior to any thing which he had actually before beheld, yet its grandeur had not exceeded the conceptions he had formed. The guide made no reply—they were already at the door, and entered. The guide introduced him into a spacious apartment, at the extremity of which stood a table, covered with a snow-white cloth, a golden cup, and a cluster of grapes, and then said that he must now leave him, but that he must remain, for he would receive in a short time a visit from the lord of the mansion, and that during the interval before his arrival, the apartment would furnish him with sufficient entertainment and instruction. The guide vanished, and he was left alone.

He now began to examine the decorations of the room, and observed that the walls were adorned with a number of pictures. Upon nearer inspection he found, to his astonishment, that they formed a complete biography of his own life. Here he saw upon the canvas that angels, though unseen, had ever been his familiar attendants; and that, sent by God, they had sometimes preserved him from imminent peril. He beheld himself first represented as an infant just expiring, when his life was prolonged by an angel gently breathing into his nostrils. Most of the occurrences here delineated were perfectly familiar to his recollection, and unfolded many things which he had never before understood, and which had perplexed him with many doubts and much uneasiness. Among others, he was particularly struck with a picture in which he was represented as falling from his horse, when death would have been inevitable, had not an angel received him in his arms, and broken the force of his descent. These merciful interpositions of God filled him with joy and gratitude; and his heart overflowed with love, as he surveyed in them all an exhibition of goodness and mercy far beyond all that he had imagined.

Suddenly his attention was arrested by a rap at the door. The lord of the mansion had arrived; the door opened, and he entered. So powerful and so overwhelming, and withal of such singular beauty was his appearance, that he sunk down

at his feet, completely overcome by his majestic presence. His lord gently raised him from the ground, and taking his hand, led him forward to the table. He pressed with his fingers the juice of the grapes into the golden cup, and after having drank himself, presented it to him, saying, "This is the new wine in my father's kingdom." No sooner had he partaken, than all uneasy sensations vanished, perfect love now cast out fear, and he conversed with his Savior as an intimate friend. Like the silver rippling of the summer sea, he heard fall from his lips the grateful approbation, "Thy labors are over, thy work is approved, rich and glorious is the reward." Thrilled with an unspeakable bliss, that glided over his spirit, and slid into the very depths of his soul, he suddenly saw glories upon glories bursting upon his view. The doctor awoke. Tears of rapture from this joyful interview were rolling down his cheeks. Long did the lively impressions of this charming dream remain upon his mind; and never could he speak of it without emotions of joy and tenderness.—*Selected.*

A VISION.

A little boy, about eight years old, just left the form; a Spirit-band of thirteen, dressed in white, appeared to escort the released spirit to his heavenly home, where the Spirit of his grandmother stood ready to receive him. The band were singing as they ascended, "Rejoice! rejoice! the dead is alive, the lost is found! Oh, glory! hallelujah!" The old lady receives the spirit and says, "Sweet little Walter come at last!" The Spirits of some little children, their hands filled with flowers, hovering round the band singing—

"Welcome, welcome to our band,
Welcome dear, sweet little brother."

They laid him upon a marble tablet, the children going round singing—

"To earth again you may return
And preach the truth you here may learn;
That all mankind from sin may flee,
And be with us in unity.
Lift up your eyes and look around!
See what a happy home you've found!

Rejoice that you from earth were called
Before by sin you were enthralled.
Heavenly strength you shall receive,
And then with us you may proceed
To view the beauties of this place,
And run with us the heavenly race.
But now we must bid you adieu,
And go our studies to pursue."

The old lady says:

"Lie down, lie down and sleep, dear little one,
And in the morn your work will be begun
In the Spirit-world to which you're come."

And now a band of musicians, of fifty-seven couple, come and play while little Walter is asleep—and then the Spirit of a young man comes and stands by Walter's head and says:

"Dear, dear little lamb,
I'll join with you my heart and hand,
And we will journey through this land,
And ever let our love expand.
Good-night, dear, darling, little one."

* As seen by Mrs. Elizabeth Stone, medium, at Detroit, on Saturday evening, September, 30, 1854.

SECTARIANISM.

In what does the evil of sectarianism consist? In the fact of its seeking to individualize itself, or in the mistaken conception that it (the particular sect) is the only true Christian Church!

Evidently in the latter; for who would think of blaming Jesus Christ for gathering together his twelve apostles? or the apostles for gathering together into one united body, after his death, and combining all their interests in one! Were not these obnoxious to the charge of sectarianism according to the loose and vague meaning generally attached to that word?

I may say, "speaking after the manner of men," that God never designed there should be more than one united body of believers—Christians—the Church. Hence the form, the assumption, the pretension, the claims to infallibility, the union of church and state, or temporal and spiritual, etc., are not the matters that are so far from the true "form of godliness," and of what would be right, provided they were individually what they think themselves to be—the true Christian Church.

The original Christian Church possessed a revelation—authoritative—of clear, well-defined principles. This revelation came first through one individual man, to whom it was safe, for all who choose to become his disciples, to render implicit (but intelligent) obedience. This will be universally admitted. After his departure, another individual (Peter) was appointed to occupy the position of leader, to whom the increasing body of believers also rendered personal obedience; and, when the latter became too numerous, helps in government, or subordinate leaders, were appointed, unto whom the people had access.

From this arrangement it is easy to see how certainly the fall of the whole system would ensue upon the defection from the principles, upon which it all rested, by the leaders. And again, how certain such defection on the part of the leaders would be if they by any means lost the revelation from which the whole system originated, and by which alone it could possibly be sustained and supported.

No sooner did the Christian Church lose the gift of Divine revelation than it lost the only principle of cement capable of binding and holding them together in the unity of the faith and the bond of perfectness. Explosions, splits, upheavings, and revolutions rolled on, rapidly succeeding each other, until Babylon (*confusion*) was and is the name by which the Spirit designates the Christian world. What, then, can any produce unity in our day but the same that created it before, *Divine revelation* in some one individual, unto whom the people can begin to accord the same respect, confidence, and obedience, that the early Christians did to Jesus!

The very first spiritual manifestation must of necessity be a centralization of God in some human being, as the head of the new dispensation, unto which the gathering of the people should be.

And, reasoning from effect to cause, the fact of the great spiritual manifestations which are now abroad among mankind, is a positive proof, not only that some great event is about to transpire, but also that a great event has already taken place upon earth. A door has been opened in heaven, through which thousands of Spirits are finding their way to earth; that door is the second appearing of Christ upon the globe on which we dwell, "whose coming is after the working of Satan, with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish;" which "working" has been going on for the last thousand years.

Spiritualism in the Church brings salvation. But what does it effect outside the Church? *Confusion*; which confusion breaks up the old organizations that cumber the ground and obstruct the movements of the true Church.

First.—Spiritualists have good ground for their contemptuous estimation of *Christianity* in the miserably inefficient efforts it has made to save man.

Second.—There is a wide-spread belief that a new religious dispensation is needed, and is near at hand, if not already in existence upon the earth.

Third.—Spiritualism, in contrasting itself with Christianity (false), has nothing to fear, but much whereof to boast. But in contrast with original, primitive Christianity it would be exactly the reverse. Then it soon proves itself to be, instead of a "new dispensation," a mere shadowy approximation to a very old one.

ARISTOTLE, on being censured for bestowing alms on a bad man, made the following noble reply: "I did not give it to the man; I gave it to humanity."

Interesting Miscellany.

FOR THE TELEGRAPH.

CONVENTION SONG.

Sung at the Convention of Lyceums held in Chester Co., Pa., August, 1854, by the Delegation from Mill Creek, Delaware. Tune—"To Mary in Heaven."

Thou crescent moon, so calmly set
Upon the fading brow of night,
Oh, leave us not—depart not yet—
For soon thou fadest from our sight.
Oh, tell us, thou fair, waning moon,
Of that bright spark of inward fire,
Like thee that swells and wanes so soon,
To what high fate may it aspire?

Shall we, O moon, in our brief life
But animate these forms of clay—
Brook care and sorrow, noise and strife,
Like thee to fade and pass away?
Oh, say not so, that Nature's crown,
Creation's brightest flower shall fall;
That seed immortal has been sown
To die beneath the funeral pall!

No, moon! thou tell'st of joy and cheer,
By light from darkness oft renewed,
By hopes that ne'er are quenched by fear
In hearts with inward truth imbued;
By aspiration's sacred power—
By insect life that bursts its cell;
Changing its creeping, toiling hour,
To wing in sport some flowery dell.

Mark ye, thou sayest, creation broad—
See whence the source of life and power,
In every stone, in every clod,
In every leaf that courts the shower;
In every motion that doth swell
The breathing air or ocean's breast;
Whether they feel the storm-god's spell,
Or hush to their quiet rest.

In every planet that doth roll
Its path eternal, marked in space,
Each comet, starting from the goal
Its lonely, lengthen'd way to trace—
All mirror forth from hour to hour,
Plain as the sunlight's dazzling sheen,
"Interior lies all source of power,
The real is the life unseen!"

Thus Nature, in her every tone,
Reveals a hidden sphere of cause
(The inward by the outward shown).
From which the soul its essence draws;
Where dwells its refuge—from the toil,
The trials and the ills of earth—
Where, breaking free of mortal coil,
The spirit owns its heavenly birth.

From this bright region, angel choirs
Are whispering to a darkened world.
"Oh, light again your altar fires,
Truth's banner is anew unfurled!"
Not now to ask your worship blind—
With reason on her altar laid—
But superstition cast behind,
She comes with lights that ne'er shall fade.

Oh, sacred Truth! pursue thy course;
Blench not at persecution's storm;
Thy accents fall with gentler force,
To aid thee comes fair Science's form;
Thy foot rests on the spoils of time;
The present is thy harvest hour;
From every age, from every clime,
Thy votaries come with gathering power.

"Eternal progress" is thy sign;
Thy radiant finger points above;
Thy lowliest record is divine;
Thy changeless watchword, "God is Love."
We come to thee—we see thy face—
We ask to join thy conquering band,
Content on earth to run our race,
Then hail with joy this promised land.

THE EVENING BEFORE MARRIAGE.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN OF ZSCHOKKE.

"We shall certainly be very happy together!" said Louise to her aunt, on the evening before her marriage; and her cheeks glowed with a deeper red and her eyes shone with delight. When a bride says so, it may easily be guessed whom of all persons in the world she means thereby.

"I do not doubt it, dear Louise," replied her aunt; "see only that you continue happy together."
"O, who can doubt that we shall continue so! I know myself. I have faults, indeed, but my love for him will correct them. And so long as we love each other, we can not be unhappy. Our love will never grow old."

"Alas!" sighed her aunt, "thou dost speak like a maiden of nineteen, on the day before her marriage, in the intoxication of wishes fulfilled, of fair hopes and happy omens. Dear child, remember this—*the heart in time grows cold*. Days will come when the magic of the sense shall fade. And when this enchantment has fled, then it first becomes evident whether we are truly worthy of love. When custom has made familiar the charms that are most attractive, when youthful freshness has died away, and with the brightness of domestic life more and more shadows have mingled, then, Louise, and not till then, can the wife say of the husband, 'He is worthy of love'; then, first the husband say of the wife, 'She blooms in imperishable beauty.' But, truly, on the day before marriage, such assertions sound laughable to me."

"Understand you, dear aunt. You would say that our mutual virtues alone can in later years give us worth for each other. But is not he to whom I am to belong—for myself I can boast of nothing but the best intentions—is he not the worthiest, noblest of all the young men of the city? Blooms not in his soul every virtue that tends to make life happy?"

"My child," replied her aunt, "I grant it. Virtues bloom in thee as well as in him; I can say this with the most truth. But, dear heart, virtues bloom only and are not yet ripened beneath the sun's heat and the shower. No blossoms deceive the expectations more than these. We can never tell in what soil they have taken root. Who knows the concealed depths of the heart?"

"Ah, dear aunt, you frighten me."

"So much the better, Louise. Such fear is right, such fear is as it should be on the evening before marriage. I love thee tenderly, and will therefore declare all my thoughts on this subject without disguise. I am not as yet an old aunt. At seven and twenty years one still looks forward to life with pleasure, the world still presents a bright side to us. I have an excellent husband. I am happy. Therefore I have the right to speak thus to thee, and to call thy attention to a secret which perhaps thou dost not yet know, one which is not often spoken to a young and pretty maiden, one, indeed, which does not greatly occupy the thoughts of a young man, and still is of the utmost importance in every household; a secret from which alone spring lasting love and unalterable happiness."

Louise seized the hand of her aunt in both of hers—"Dear aunt! you know I believe you in every thing. You mean that enduring happiness and lasting love are not insured to us by accidental qualities, by fleeting charms, but only by those virtues of the mind which we bring to each other. These are the best dowry which we can possess; these never become old."

"As it happens, Louise. The virtues also, like the beauties of the body, can grow old, and become repulsive and hateful with age."
"How, dearest aunt! what is it you say? Name to me a virtue which can become hateful with years."

"When they have become so, we no longer call them virtues, as a beautiful maiden can no longer be called beautiful when time has changed her to an old and wrinkled woman."
"But, aunt, the virtues are nothing earthly."

"Perhaps."
"How can gentleness and mildness ever become hateful?"
"And nobly courage!"
"And modest diffidence!"
"Turns to fawning humility."
"And noble pride!"
"To vulgar laughableness."
"And readiness to oblige!"
"Becomes a habit of too ready friendship and servility."

"Dear aunt, you make me almost angry. My future husband can never degenerate thus. He has one virtue which will preserve him as he is, forever. A deep sense of indestructible feeling for every thing that is great, and good, and noble, dwells in his bosom; and this delicate susceptibility to all that is noble dwells in me also, I hope, as well as in him. This is the innate pledge and security for our happiness."

"But if it should grow old with you; if it should change to hateful excitability; and excitability is the worst enemy to matrimony. You both possess sensibility. That I do not deny; but beware lest this grace should degenerate into an irritable and quarrelsome mortal!"
"Ah, dearest, if I might never become old! I could then be sure that my husband would never cease to love me."

"Thou art greatly in error, dear child! Wert thou always as fresh and beautiful as to-day, still thy husband's eye would by custom of years become indifferent to these advantages. Custom is the greatest enchantress in the world, and in the house of one of the most benevolent of fairies. She renders that which is the most beautiful, as well as the ugliest, familiar. A wife is young, and becomes old; it is custom which hinders the husband from perceiving the change. On the contrary, did she remain young, while he became old, it might bring consequences, and render the man in years jealous. It is better, kind Providence has ordered it. Imagine that thou hast grown to be an old woman, and thy husband were a blooming youth; how wouldst thou then feel?"

Louise rubbed her chin, and said, "I can not tell."
Her aunt continued: "But I will call thy attention to a secret which—"

"That is it," interrupted Louise hastily, "that is it which I long so much to hear."

Her aunt said: "Listen to me attentively. What I now tell thee I have proved. It consists of two parts. The first part of the means to render a marriage happy of itself, prevents every possibility of dissension, and would even at last make the spider and the fly the best of friends with each other. The second part is the best and surest method of preserving feminine attractions."

"Ah!" exclaimed Louise.
"The former half of the means, then: In the solitary hour after the ceremony, take thy bridegroom and demand a solemn vow of him, and give him a solemn vow in return. Promise one another secretly, 'neither, not even in mere jest, to wrangle with each other; never to bandy words or indulge in the least ill humor.' Never, I say, never. Wrangling, even in jest, putting on an air of ill humor, never to tease, becomes earnest by practice. Mark that. Next, promise each other, sincerely and solemnly, never to have a secret from one another, under whatever pretext, with whatever excuse it may be. You must, continually and every moment, see clearly into each other's bosom. Even when one of you have committed a fault, wait not an instant, but confess it freely—let it cost tears, but confess it. And as you keep nothing secret from each other, so, on the contrary, preserve the privacy of your house, marriage-state, and heart from father, mother, sister, brother, and all the world. Y. a. two, with God's help, build your own quiet world. Every third or fourth one whom you draw into it with you, will form a party, and stand between you two! That should never be. Promise this to each other. Renew the vow at each temptation. You will find your account in it. Your souls will grow, as it were, together, and at last will become as one. Ah! if many a young pair had on their wedding-day known this simple secret, and straightaway practiced it, how many marriages were happier than, alas, they are!"

Louise kissed her aunt's hand with ardor. "I feel that it must be so. When this confidence is absent, even married, even after wedding, are two strangers who do not know each other. It should be so; without this there can be no happiness. And now, aunt, the best preservation of female beauty!"

Her aunt smiled and said: "We may not conceal from ourselves that a handsome man pleases us a hundred times more than an ill-looking one, and the men are pleased with us when we are pretty. But what we call beautiful, what in the men pleases us, and in us pleases the men is not skin and hair, and shape and color, as in a picture or a statue, but it is the character, it is the soul that is within these, which enchants by looks and words, earnestness, and joy, and sorrow. The men admire us the more they suppose those virtues of the mind to exist in us which the outside promises; and we think a malicious man disagreeable, however graceful and handsome he may be. Let a young maiden, then, who would preserve her beauty, preserve but that purity of soul, those sweet qualities of the mind, those virtues, in short, by which she first drew her lover to her feet. And the first preservative of virtue, to render it unchanging and keep it ever young, is religion, that inward union with the Deity and eternity, and faith—is piety, that walking with God, so pure, so peaceful, so beneficent to mortals."

"So, dear heart," continued the aunt, "there are virtues which arise out of mere experience. These grow old with time, and alter; because by change of circumstances and inclination prudence alters her means of action, and because her growth does not always keep pace with that of our years and passions. But religious virtues can never change; those remain eternally the same, because our God is always the same, and that eternity the same, which we and those who love us are hastening to enter. Preserve, then, a mind innocent and pure, looking for every thing from God; thus will that beauty of soul remain for which thy bridegroom to-day adores thee. I am no bigot, no fanatic; I am thy aunt of seven-and-twenty. I love all rational amusement; but for this very reason I say to thee—be a dear, good Christian, and thou wilt as a mother, yes as a grandmother, be still beautiful!"

Louise threw her arms about her neck, and wept in silence, and whispered, "I thank thee, angel!"—Christian Age.

SLEEPING IN THE MOONLIGHT.—A young man belonging to the 2d Illinois Infantry, stationed at Tampica, lay down in front of his tent perfectly well, with the full moon shining directly in his face, and having been on guard the night before slept soundly until morning. When he attempted to rise he was nearly blind, his cheeks were puffed out to twice their usual size, his eyes were nearly closed, and surrounded with circles of almost jet black, presenting a terrible sight. It was a full week before he entirely recovered.

LAY OF SAN JUAN.—The Buffalo Republic heads an account of the recent brilliant victory achieved by the Cyane at Greytown, with the following verse from an old ditty. It describes the exploit perfectly:

"Father and mother and I,
And ten good soldiers more,
Beat an old woman stone blind,
That couldn't see much before."

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